Plan of LeT attack BARC/Mumbai city

*479. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists are planning to target Bhabha Atomic Research Centre at Mumbai by using suicide bomber and plan to destroy Mumbai city by using F-16 and Mirage-5 bombers; and

(b) if so, whether Government intends to avert probable attacks on Mumbai city by Pak Terrorists using F-16, Mirage-5 bombers, keeping in view the revelations made by Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists caught at Nagpada, Mumbai recently?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) Though there is no recent input, yet BARC continues to be in the target list of terrorist organizations including LeT. The terrorists arrested on Jan. 6, 2006 at Nagpada, did not reveal any plan of attack on Mumbai city by Pak terrorists using F-16 or Mirage-5 bombers.

(b) All the concerned security agencies have been alerted to strengthen the security arrangements in view of possible terrorist threats.

Protection of domestic growers of Virginia tobacco

*480. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plans to protect domestic growers of Virginia tobacco from low-cost imports;

(b) the details of the demand made by various farmer groups in this regard; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to protect tobacco farmers to ensure that they are not put into economic crisis by weak import policies and low import tariffs?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) There are no reported low cost imports of tobacco and tobacco products into India.

(b) No specific demand in this regard has been received from any of the farmers groups.

(c) The Tobacco Board provides assistance to tobacco farmers through various Extension & Developmental schemes for improving the quality and production of tobacco in tune with the changing international demand and quality. The Board extends subsidy from 25% to 50% to the growers under various schemes such as Farm Mechanization, Integrated Pest Management, Energy conversation measures like fixing venturi furnaces to Barns and Roof Insulation to the Barns etc. The Board also helps farmers in construction of mini check dams/farm ponds for irrigation of tobacco crops and arranges input loans & crop loans. The entire crop of Virginia tobacco produced by tobacco farmers each year is marketed at a fairly remunerative price.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Coffee cultivation in Karnataka

3331. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Coffee Board has taken any steps to encourage coffee growers in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the steps taken last year to expand the cultivation of coffee in that area;

(c) what steps have been taken to expand the cultivation in other areas; and

(d) the details of the surveys of coffee cultivation potential conducted in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Coffee Board in collaboration with the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) of the Government of Andhra Pradesh has been involved in a coffee expansion programme in Visakhapatnam District